Plan to set up an Indian Maritime University

566. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a plan has been formulated to set-up an Indian Maritime University (IMU) to recast the Maritime education and to improve the quality of Indian seafarers; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the status and position likely to be assigned to the existing institutions like the Indian Institute of Maritime Studies (IIMS), the Lal Bahadur Shastri National College, etc. and the regulatory frame work drawn up for the private sector institutes mushrooming across the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) and (b) In order to make appropriate changes in the institutional framework for imparting maritime training, including the feasibility and desirability of bringing the training institutes under a University type of structure, the Government of India, in October 1991, set up a Committee on Maritime Education and Traning (COMET). The Committee in its report submitted in May 1992 recommended establishment of an autonomous body as a Society registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 to be designated as Indian Maritime University to manage, control, supervise, direct and monitor the various Government run maritime training institutes. It was also further recommended that as soon as practicable thereafter, the University be accorded statutory status under an Act of Parliament. Accordingly the Indian Institute of Maritime Studies (IIMS), Mumbai has been registered as a Society under Societies Registration Act, 1860 on 6th June, 2002. The IIMS is a forerunner to its ultimate conversion into a University.

The four government maritime training institutions namely, the Lal Bahadur Shastri College of Advanced Maritime Studies and Research, Mumbai, Training Ship 'Chanakya', New Mumbai and Marine Engineering and Research Institutes located at Kolkata with its branch at Mumbai, which were under the control of the Director General of Shipping of the Ministry of Shipping, have been placed within the domain of I.I.M.S.

The present system for regulating the private training institutes by Directorate General of Shipping will continue. However, the private

institutes may come within the purview of Indian Maritime University, when it is established.

Agreement to create an International North-South Transport Corridor

567. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India, Russia and Iran have agreed to create an International North-South Transport Corridor, a multi-modal faster route between Mumbai Port and Moscow *via* the Mediterranean Sea and Suez Canal;

(b) if so, the details of the agreement and the steps taken to operationalise the Corridor; and

(c) the details of specific advantages likely to accrue especially the reduction in operational costs of shippers and exporters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR)(a) Yes, Sir. An Inter-Governmental Agreement on International 'North South' Transport Corridor amongst the Government of Republic of India, Islamic Republic of Iran and Russian Federation was signed at St. Petersburg on 12th September, 2000. The multi-modal faster route will operate from Ports of India to Moscow passing through Iran and Caspian Sea.

(b) The provisions of this Agreement will regulate International Transport and transit of goods and passengers through the national territories of the parties to this agreement carried out by all modes of transport or through combined transport along the routes determined by the Competent Authorities of the respective parties. Government of India is actively supporting the development of this Corridor. At the transport Ministers' meeting in St. Petersburg in May this year, a Coordination Council of the International "North South" Transport Corridor has been established. The Council adopted the Statute of the Coordination council of the International North South Transport Corridor. The Council, at the suggestion from Indian side, has agreed to set up two Expert Groups to consider and recommend solutions to the issues relating to commercial and operational matters and documentation, customs matters and related issues.